



PARENT **H**ANDBOOK FOR
ATHLETICS

Baldwin-Whitehall
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Baldwin-Whitehall School District Athletic Department

PHILOSOPHY

A competitive athletic program will be provided by the Baldwin-Whitehall School District that will encourage **multi-sport participation** by boys and girls. A carefully regulated program of interscholastic athletics will be maintained as an integral part of the total educational process, and emphasis will be placed on **teaching life's lessons** through the medium of athletics.

Participation in athletics is a **privilege** that holds student-athletes responsible to the team, school, and community. Participation will help the student-athletes develop physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally in preparation for **success in life** after high school.

Athletic contests should always be played with emphasis on sportsmanship, teamwork, competition, and how to win and lose gracefully. The element of competition and winning must never outweigh **sportsmanship** and the **educational value** of contests. Athletic competition also improves school spirit and helps students develop pride in their school.

Coaches are first **teachers** and must provide all athletes with examples of exemplary behavior. Exceptional coaching requires great leadership, thorough planning, and effective communication. Exemplification of these qualities will contribute to the student-athlete's chances for **success in a competitive democratic society**.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The Baldwin-Whitehall School District believes that students need to be able to explore athletics at the age when they are learning about themselves and their abilities. Participating in athletics allows students to discover their abilities, improve confidence, and improve performance in the classroom. The Athletic Department encourages fair playing time for middle school student-athletes, and attempts to give students the opportunity to develop their skills in a sport by maximizing both practice and game time. Hard work, sacrifice, and desire are some of the keys to success in athletics and in life. These components of success are encouraged and developed in our athletic program.

ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

PHILISOPHICAL DIFFERENCES FOR PARTICIPATION AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

- 7th and 8th grade athletic experiences should serve as a time of exploration and discovery as some student-athletes participate in interscholastic sports for the first time. Practice and playing time are maximized to benefit the development of the athletic skills. A player's effort, attitude, etc. during practice will be considered when determining playing time.
- The 9th grade level serves as a transition year during which the concepts of exploration and discovery give way to the development of the cornerstones for success. Fundamentals of the sport are emphasized along with a commitment to the sport.

- At the J.V. level the athlete needs to discover what it takes to be a successful athlete at Baldwin High School. Dedication, desire, and a willingness to sacrifice for the good of the team are just three of many character traits that athletes are expected to emphasize.
- The Varsity level is the culmination of the athletic experience. Emphasis at this level is on the use of the fundamentals of the sport, dedication, desire, hard work, and sacrifice to be successful. Success is not necessarily indicated by a win or loss, but measured by the quality of the effort, performance, and achievement of goals.

PARTICIPATION IS A PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT

It is a privilege for all students who choose to participate in athletics. We maintain strict standards in academics and behavior as well as emphasizing dedication, desire, and sacrificing personal goals for team goals.

PARTICIPATION IN MULTIPLE SPORTS

- The Athletic Department expects students participating in athletics for BWSD to be committed to the sport **in season**. As a result, the student should not compromise the school's team concept by participating on an out of season team.
- In keeping with our philosophy, to fully develop our student-athletes, and in order that our athletic teams may be as competitive as possible, student-athletes are **strongly encouraged** to participate in a variety of sports for the BWSD if they are capable of doing so.

CUTTING FROM TEAMS

In some cases, making a team at Baldwin High School and Harrison Middle School is highly competitive. Therefore, the student/athlete trying out for a team must realize that he/she may not make the team.

PIAA and BWSD ELIGIBILITY RULES

A student who participates in interscholastic athletics at a school that is a member of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc. (PIAA) must adhere to the PIAA rules; otherwise you will lose your eligibility to represent your school in interscholastic athletics. If you participate while ineligible, your school or team may be penalized. It is, therefore, important for you to be aware of the requirements to which you are subject.

The information contained here highlights and summarizes the major eligibility requirements you must meet in order to participate in interscholastic athletics. It does not list every rule or every detail. Unless otherwise indicated, each requirement applies to grades 7 through 12.

Any student that is suspended from school or is serving an in-school suspension is not able to practice with the team or play in a game on that given day.

AGE

You may not have reached your 19th birthday by June 30 immediately preceding the school year (15th birthday where interscholastic competition is limited to grades 7 and 8; 16th birthday where it is limited to grades 7 through 9).

AMATEUR STATUS AND AWARDS

To be eligible to participate in a sport, you must be an amateur in the sport. You will lose your amateur status in a sport for at least a year if:

1. You, or your school, or the organization which you represent, or your parent or guardian receives money or property for or related to your athletic ability, performance, participation, or services.
2. You accept compensation for teaching, training or coaching in a sport. You may receive normal and customary compensation for acting as an instructor in or officiating recreational activities, or for serving as a lifeguard at swimming areas.

You may receive awards only from your school, the sponsor of an athletic event, the news media, or a non-profit service organization approved by your school principal. Permissible awards are a sweater, jacket, blazer, blanket, shirt, shorts, jersey, cap, watch, ring, scroll, photograph, medal, plaque, or similar trophy, which must bear appropriate organizational insignia or comparable identification.

ATTENDANCE

1. You must be regularly enrolled in your school and in full-time attendance there.
2. You are eligible only at the school at which you are enrolled.
3. If you are absent from school during a semester for a total of 20 or more school days, you will lose your eligibility until you have been in attendance for a total of 45 school days following your 20th day of absence.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY/ PIAA ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of a grading period, shall be reported on a weekly basis, and shall be filed in the principal's office.

In cases where a student's cumulative work from the beginning of the grading period does not as of any Friday meet the above standards, the student shall be ineligible from the immediately following Sunday through the Saturday immediately following the next Friday as of which the student's cumulative work from the beginning of the grading period meets the above standards.

In cases where a student's work in any preceding grading period does not meet the above standards, the student shall be ineligible to participate in

interscholastic athletics for at least fifteen (15) school days of the next grading period.

At the end of the school year, the student's final grades in the student's subjects rather than the student's grades for the last grading period shall be used to determine the student's eligibility for the next grading period.

You must be passing at least four full-credit subjects or the equivalent as of each Friday during the grading period. If you fail to meet this requirement, you will lose your eligibility from the immediately following Sunday through the next Saturday immediately following the next Friday as of which you meet this requirement.

ALL-STAR CONTESTS AND NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL/INTERSCHOLASTIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

You will lose your eligibility in a sport for one year if you participate in an all-star contest in that sport or if you participate in a contest to qualify for and/or determine a single national high school/interscholastic individual championship team in that sport.

CONSENT OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN

You are eligible only if, before you begin practice, an official PIAA certificate signed by your parent or guardian consenting to your participation in the particular sport involved is on file with the principal of your school.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

INITIAL EVALUATION: Prior to any student participating in Practices, Inter-School Practices, Scrimmages, and/or Contests, at any PIAA member school in the student's first sport in a school year, the student is required to (1) complete a Comprehensive Initial Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation (CIPPE); and (2) have the appropriate person(s) complete the first four Sections of the CIPPE Form. Upon completion of Sections 1, 2, and 3 by the parent/guardian, and Section 4 by an Authorized Medical Examiner, those Sections must be turned in to the Principal, or the Principal's designee, of the student's school for retention by the school. The CIPPE shall be performed no earlier than June 1st and shall be effective, regardless of when performed during a school year, until the next May 31st. **SUBSEQUENT SPORT(S) IN THE SAME SCHOOL YEAR:** Following completion of a CIPPE, the same student seeking to participate in Practices, Inter-School Practices, Scrimmages, and/or Contests in subsequent sport(s) in the same school year, must complete Section 5 of this form and must turn in that Section to the Principal, or Principal's designee, of his or her school. The Principal, or the Principal's designee, of the student's school will then determine whether Section 6 need be completed. **WRESTLERS MUST COMPLETE SECTION 7 OF THE CIPPE FORMS.**

Students who are under medical care as a result of an injury will not be permitted to participate/compete until a written approval from the physician/physician assistant is received by our trainer.

TRANSFERS

You are treated as having transferred whenever you change schools, even if you are out of school for a period of time before entering the new school.

If you transfer from one school to another, you are eligible immediately at the new school:

1. When you live with your natural or adoptive parents in the new school district upon WPIAL approval.
2. When you live with a court-appointed legal guardian in the new school district, upon approval by the PIAA District committee.
3. When you transfer between public and private schools or between private schools, where the two school districts overlap, under the following circumstances:
 - a. the transfer is from a junior high/middle school to a high school upon the completion of the highest grade in the junior high/middle school.
 - b. the transfer is to a high school at the beginning of the lowest grade in the high school.

If you transfer from one school to another in whole or in part for athletic purposes or if you were recruited, you will lose your athletic eligibility for one year. This requirement applies even if you would otherwise be eligible at the school to which you transferred.

Most students who are not eligible immediately will be ineligible for one year from the date of transfer.

PERIOD OF ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION AND GRADE REPETITION

1. You will lose your eligibility when you have been in attendance more than eight semesters beyond the eighth grade. If you repeat a grade after eighth, you will be ineligible as a senior.
2. You may participate only one season in each sport during each school year.
3. A junior high/middle school student may not participate in any sport for more seasons than there are grades in his or her school above sixth grade.

HEALTH CONCERNS

PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING SUPPLEMENTS

The Athletic Department disapproves the use of performance-enhancing supplements such as creatine, androstenedione, thermogenics, anabolic steroids, etc. Such products may have a damaging effect on the health of those who use them. Further, any advantage a student/athlete may derive from the use of such products will likely be over athletes who do not use them; athletes who are not as willing to take chances with their health. It is hoped that BWSD athletes will compete hard and reach their full potential, but they should do it based on their natural abilities, without the introduction of foreign substances into their bodies.

If a student-athlete is found to be in possession of a non-prescription performance-enhancing supplement, it will be confiscated and his/her parents will be informed.

If a student-athlete is found to be in possession of a prescription performance-enhancing supplement, i.e., a drug, for which he/she does not have a prescription, or is using a prescription drug improperly, or is transmitting a prescription drug to another student, then the student(s) involved will be subject to the district's Drug and Alcohol Policy, and potentially the Anabolic Steroid Policy.

SUSPECTED EATING DISORDERS

If the Athletic Department suspects that a particular athlete may have an eating disorder, the school will alert the athlete's parents to the concerns of the staff and may require a statement from the athlete's physician that he/she is physically able to participate in athletics.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND SPORTSMANSHIP

SPORTSMANSHIP: Treat others as you would want to be treated and exhibit the qualities of fairness, courtesy and grace in winning **and defeat**. Reinforce all concepts of sportsmanship and **set the example** for our student body to follow. Cheer for your team, respect the opponents and officials, and make all visitors feel like guests in your home.

GOALS FOR SPORTSMANSHIP INCLUDE:

- Developing a sense of dignity under all circumstances
- Respecting the rules of the game
- Respecting the officials who administer the rules
- Respecting opponents
- Acknowledging opponent's efforts to do their best
- Refraining from disrespectful behavior

Your actions and reaction to situations can have a significant impact not only on your child, but also on an entire program. Carefully consider the possible consequences of your actions and acknowledge your responsibility to your child and the school to conduct yourself with exemplary behavior.

OFFICIALS:

- All people can have a bad day - we all make mistakes
- People officiate because they love to be involved with sports and kids
- When something happens you disagree with remember:
 - the official probably has a better view than you, and
 - take a deep breath and refrain from saying something that may embarrass you, your child, and the school.

POSITIVE ATHLETIC PARENTING: emphasize the following to your son or daughter:

- Play the sport for the **enjoyment** of the experience.
- Do not focus on obtaining scholarships for college.
- Encourage participation in as many sports as your child wants to play.

Specialization has led to decreased enjoyment and burnout. In many cases, parents are making a commitment of finances and time invested in lessons, travel, etc. for a child's development in a sport from earlier and earlier ages. This often leads to student-athletes experiencing **undue pressure** to play well and earn a scholarship.

GUIDELINES FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILD:

- Be realistic about your child's ability.
- Be a positive motivator (4 positives for each negative).
- Don't be envious of other athletes' ability or skill.
- The coach sees all the athletes at practice **every day**, in competitive drills, etc. They know the abilities at **this stage** of development, **not** how good someone was in the past.
- Emphasize **commitment to the program** and **loyalty to the coach**.
- Never sacrifice academics for athletics.
- Be a good role model for your child.
- Encourage good decision making.
- Encourage your child to be a leader. All team members have leadership responsibilities.
- Do not degrade the coach or his staff; we all make mistakes. Instead, emphasize **loyalty** and **perseverance**, and use it as a **teaching moment**.

PARENTAL CONCERNS AND COMMUNICATION

Both parenting and coaching can be extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to students.

Communications you should expect from your child's coach:

1. philosophy as a coach;
2. expectation the coach has for your child;
3. location and times of all games and any changes to this schedule;
4. location and times of all practices – any changes should be made with 24 hour advance notice to athletes;
5. team requirements, i.e., practices, special equipment, out of season training;
6. procedures to follow should your child be injured during participation; and
7. discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation.

Communications that Coaches expect from Parents:

1. concerns expressed directly to the coach;
2. specific concerns with regard to coach's philosophy and/or expectations; and
3. notification of any illness or injury or missed practices.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

1. treatment of your child, mentally and physically;
2. ways to help your child improve; and
3. concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are teachers. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all athletes involved. As you have seen from the above list, certain things can and should be discussed with the coach. Other things, such as the ones listed below, must be left to the professional judgment of the coach.

Issues NOT appropriate to discuss with coaches:

1. playing time;
2. team strategy;
3. play calling; and
4. other student -athletes.

There are often situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parents. The student-athlete can be invited and involved in these meetings. To resolve the problem, we must have everyone's help and involvement.

If there is a problem have your son/daughter talk to the coach one on one. (It is a part of growing up.)

If this does not resolve the problem, the parents should:

1. call the coach and request a return call or a face to face meeting with the coach. Coaches should make themselves available for these calls and/or meetings.
2. If the problem is not resolved through discussion with the coach, contact the Athletic Director at 412-885-7515.

Parents MUST not:

1. confront the coach before or after practice; or
2. confront the coach before or after a game.

Coaches are teachers. A parent would not walk into a classroom during class time and yell at a teacher about a poor grade, so please do not confront the coach in public. There are proper ways to communicate and have your concerns addressed. Practices and games are highly emotional times for everyone involved, players, coaches and parents. Meetings and concerns do not get resolved during emotional times.

One final note:

One of the Athletic Director's responsibilities is to continually assist his coaches to become great teachers of life's lessons while preparing your son or daughter to be successful in life after high school. A coach's development is always a work in progress no matter how much experience he or she has. Please understand it is NOT the job of the athletic director to "go after" a coach because of a complaint. Coaches, like teachers, will have the opportunity to improve.

The Athletic Department hopes this information helps make your child's and your experience with the athletic program less stressful and more enjoyable.

MODIFICATIONS TO THIS HANDBOOK

The Athletic Director reserves the right to make additions to this handbook in writing to students and parents at any time during the school year.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO THE PARENT HANDBOOK FOR ATHLETICS

I/We have read and understood the philosophy and guidelines set forth by the Baldwin-Whitehall School District Athletic Department. I have read Parent Involvement and Sportsmanship and Parent Concerns and Communication and will adhere to the Athletic Department's expectations.

Son/Daughter's Name (please print): _____ Year of Grad: _____

Sports: _____, _____, _____

Parent/Guardian Name (please print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return to the head coach.